

# Bill Marks

Bill's life touched so many people and whether he was caring for a sick friend, or raging against injustice, he was always 100% committed to the task.

Our lives crossed many times during the great health campaigns in Hackney, at the Hackney CHC of which he was a loyal member for many years, at the Association of CHCs where Bill and i worked together very successfully over the last few months of the organisations life and laterly in the Patients Forum for the LAS.

Working with Bill in any capacity was always inspirational. He was a doer, a creator, no task ever seemed to be too difficult or too much trouble for Bill.

His printing skills created bold and memorable images, and he became famous to many of us as the local printer in Hoxton, producing CHC newsletters and campaign leaflets for the community and then forgetting to send in an invoice. His computing skills were also remarkable and he was somehow able to produce websites almost over-night.

He often knew what was needed before anybody else and as new organisations were born, Bill would have their websites, email addresses and business cards ready on day one. He was the

engine that made things work in community organisations and a campaigner both locally and nationally who was impatient for change and for people to see sense.

Bill was passionate about so many causes and a great communicator. He was firmly committed to complementary medicine and spent a great deal of time developing the Hoxton Health Group. To get a sense of Bill's sense of humour you only have to look at the group's website to see the people waving and cheering at you as you open the site.

He was also committed to promoting independent health advocacy and I remember two years ago we were invited to meet with the Ghanaian Health Minister who was visiting in London. Bill, not wanting to miss an opportunity of spreading his wisdom learnt from dealing with the NHS in Hackney, bent the Minister's ear, in an attempt to persuade the Minister of the serious pitfalls of governments at first nurturing independent voluntary organisations and then destroying them by absorbing them into the state apparatus.

More recently Bill became rather involved with building and repairing leaky roofs in Clacton and stories of unreliable builders and the frustrations of the weather became intermingled with Bill's most recent interest, which was the Patients' Forum campaign to improve stroke services in hospitals across London.

It is a sad irony that just a few weeks ago Bill was making a recommendation to our meeting at City Hall to improve stroke

care and then sadly and suddenly succumbed himself.

So many people have commented on Bill life:

- That he was a good bloke and a great loss to so many people in all sorts of ways

They have expressed their:

- Their great sadness,
- How sorely he will be missed
- How much they enjoyed working with him.
- The tragedy of Bill dying so young
- He was a great campaigner with a wonderful sense of humour.
- Bill was passionate about patient involvement and a genuinely nice person.
- We shall miss him dreadfully
- How hard it is to take in his death.
- He will be a great loss to so many.
- Sister Josephine - I pray for the happy repose of his soul and pray that the Lord will console his family and friends.

As we say goodbye to Bill, let us remember his great work, his passion for justice, his commitment to the community and most of all, that all of us who knew him have lost a dear and caring friend.